



The CURRENT

STONY CREEK'S HOME AND SCHOOL MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2011

From the Principal's Desk

On Friday evening, October 21st, our PTO Halloween Family Fun Night was a great success. Our students proudly wore their "frightful" and "original" costumes, and they enjoyed the Halloween crafts and DJ in the cafetorium. On Saturday, October 29th, our entire area was "treated" or "tricked" by Mother Nature – snow in October? And on Monday, the hallways and classrooms of Stony Creek were hopping as our students, parents, and staff marked the Halloween season with class parties and a colorful Parade of Characters and Costumes. Thanks to the volunteers who helped in our classrooms and to the many parents and guests who showed up to view the parade. A good time was had by all.

Our new science program is well underway with students "wondering, thinking, trying, observing, recording, and ultimately discovering! Students have been asking some great questions: For example, one first grader asked, "Why do clouds filled with water and ice look so big and fluffy?" During the second graders' study of trees and how to tell the age of a tree, the students were looking at the growth rings on the cross section of a tree trunk. One student noticed that the rings were not all the same thickness and asked, "I wonder why there is more space on this side than this side? This kind of thinking is to be celebrated, and our students' curiosity and interest in making sense of their world serves to fuel this kind of thinking

As we head into November, we look forward to American Education Week, the PTO-sponsored Giving Night, our Parent-Teacher Conferences, and of course, the Thanksgiving Holiday! On November 15, we invite our parents to visit their child's classroom. See the schedule included later in this newsletter.

Finally, I want to wish our Stony Creek families a Happy Thanksgiving! May you all enjoy a special time with your family and friends. If you are traveling over this holiday period, travel safely. Happy Thanksgiving!

Gary W. Abbamont

STONY CREEK'S UPCOMING EVENTS

NOVEMBER

- 7 Fall Picture Re-Takes
- 7 PTO Fall Book Fair/Family Fun Night, 6:30 PM
- 8-11 PTO Fall Book Fair
- 8 Professional Staff In-Service Day (Schools Closed)
- 10 PTO Meeting, 9:30 AM
- 15 American Education Week –Visitation Day
- 18 PTO Giving Night, 6:30 PM
- 21 Fall Conferences, Early Dismissal K-8
- 22 Fall Conferences, Early Dismissal K-12
- 23 Fall Conferences, Early Dismissal K-12
- 24 Thanksgiving Holiday, All Schools Closed
- 25 Thanksgiving Holiday, All Schools Closed



Our Parent Drop-off & Pick-up Line

As you know, each morning and afternoon we have a fair number of parent vehicles that either drop-off or pick-up students. We ask that drivers DO NOT use cell phones while students are in the process of departing or loading. Student safety is our utmost concern, and every driver must be fully attentive while in our parking lot.

The PTO Family Directory

Our PTO Family Directory is currently being put together, and you can expect to receive your copy very soon. Many thanks to Kathy Reilly and the Stony Creek PTO for providing this invaluable resource to our families. Parents find this directory helpful for these kinds of reasons: arranging play dates, inviting classmates and schoolmates to birthday parties and other events, calling classmates for homework clarification, etc.



American Education Week

American Education Week is always celebrated the week prior to the week of Thanksgiving. In recognition of this celebratory week, parents are invited to visit Stony Creek on November 15th. You may visit between 9 and 11 in the morning and between 1 and 3 in the afternoon. A letter will come home soon providing you with more details about this event. For now, put the date on your calendar and make a point to join us. We have much to share with you!

Fall Conference Session

On November 21, 22, and 23, we will host our Fall Parent-Teacher Conference Session. Each conference will provide information about your child's strengths as well as areas for improvement. We look forward to these opportunities to partner with you to benefit your child's learning. Conference letters will come home with students on Tuesday, November 1st.

Giving Night

PTO Community Service Event

On Friday, November 18th, all Stony Creek families are invited to attend a very special event at our school. All families attending will work on projects to benefit the less fortunate of our community. Look for more information to come home soon with your child. This event promises to be something very special, and we are confident that your participation will be very rewarding!



Emergency Dismissal Plan

What happens when school needs to close early?

In the event that school needs to close early due to inclement weather, *School Messenger*, our district's automated communication system, notifies parents electronically (see article below).

In the event that school closes early, the school will follow the parent's plan for dismissal. Parents were able to designate one of these options:

- *My child will ride his/her assigned bus home.*
- *My child will be picked up by parent/guardian.*
- *My child is a walker and will walk home.*

The YMCA After School Program is not an option as this program is canceled in such early closings due to inclement weather.

School Messenger

School Messenger is the automated telephone system that our district uses in order to contact families with important announcements and emergency notifications. With this system parents are able to determine how they are notified: by telephone, cell phone, e-mail, text message, or some combination of them. Parents are also responsible for updating the method of communication. Did your cell phone number change? Log on and make the change yourself.

Home and School Communication

There are many ways at Stony Creek to maintain strong home and school communication. Consider the many ways to keep in touch with the happenings at Stony Creek.

- E-Mail
- Telephone
- Note
- Conference
- School Newsletters (TheCURRENT & This Week at Stony Creek)
- District/School Web Page
- Principal's Blog (on the school's web page)

In addition to these forms of communication, you can also receive some very helpful and important in these ways.

- e-Notify: (Important information e-mailed to you.)
- School Messenger: (Important information, including emergency school closing and delay information, communicated to you via e-mail, text, phone, etc.)
- This Week at Stony Creek: (Weekly e-mail providing you with information for the upcoming week at Stony Creek.)

Later in this newsletter are the directions for registering for these communication services.

Resources on Our Web Page

Log on to the Stony Creek web page and look for the newest addition: RESOURCES on the left hand side in the navy blue rectangle. Click on it, and what will you find there:

- Stony Creek Parent Handbook 2011=2012
- Home and School Communication Sources 2011-2012
- WSD Curriculum Overviews by Grade Level

Here is the link:

<http://www.wsdweb.org/page.cfm?p=2203>

Before School Music Ensembles & Our National Geographic Bee Program

For students participating in our Before School Music Ensemble and National Geographic Bee Program, please remember, students arrive between 7:45 and 7:50. This is the time when our music teachers or parent volunteers are in our school lobby and ready to receive the students.

Safety at Stony Creek

As Principal of Stony Creek, it is my responsibility to ensure the safety of our students and staff each and every day at our school. Toward that end, there are standard emergency drills practiced regularly by our students and staff. The following drills will occur throughout the year, and I wanted you to be knowledgeable of them!

Evacuation Drills (Monthly)
Intruder Drills (Seasonally)
Severe Weather Drills (Seasonally)
School Emergency Response Team (Medical Emergency - Staff Only)
Bus Evacuation Drills (Fall)

These drills are familiar to our students in grades 1-5; however, our kindergarten students will experience these drills for the first time this year. I plan to send a note home with kindergarten students on the day when we conduct the Intruder and Severe Weather Drills for the first time. This way parents can discuss the drill with their children.

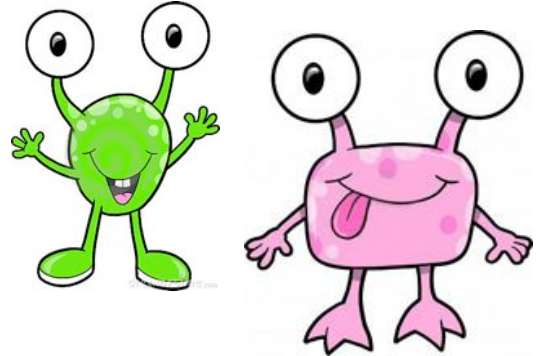
More Dress Like a Teacher Pictures! Way to Go, Student Council! Great Spirit Day!



It's the PTO FALL BOOK FAIR 2011



"One for Books!"



During the Book Fair week, November 7 - 11th, each classroom is being challenged to bring in the most money for "One for Books."



Here is how it works...

Monday: bring in pennies

Tuesday: no school

Wednesday: nickels

Thursday: dimes

Friday: quarters, or anything else!

*Scholastic will send one book to charity for every one dollar we raise
AND we get to buy books for our own Stony Creek students-in-need!*

To make this event even more fun,
Mr. Abbamont has agreed to play along with us!

The winning classroom - the one raising the most money by the end of the week - gets to pick one of the following activities for Mr. Abbamont to do!

- Mr. Abbamont will visit classrooms and cruise the school hallways **on a tricycle**.
- **Pie in the face** - a whipped cream pie that is (one toss for each student in the winning class)!
- Mr. Abbamont will **spend a day with your class**, from line-up to dismissal. He will also do all of the work assigned by the teacher.



Halloween 2011

STONY CREEK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HOME AND SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

All of us at Stony Creek highly value the communication between our school and the home. In our efforts to communicate information in a timely and efficient manner, we have various approaches to communication. I strongly encourage you to make each approach a part of the school's communication with your home! One of our most important forms of communication is the district website: wsdweb.org. Be sure to visit it for information about our district.

Gary W. Abbamont
Principal

SCHOOL MESSENGER

SchoolMessenger is the district's emergency notification system. This is the system that sends out calls and text messages for snow closings and absences. The district will send out a letter with individualized account information for signing up to SchoolMessenger. If you have lost your letter or your activation code has expired, please go to our district website (<http://www.wsdweb.org/page.cfm?p=1909>) for assistance. Once you are registered in the system you can inform the system as to the best ways to communicate with your family (phone call, text message, e-mail). Once registered, you can go into the system with your password and change how you receive the information from School Messenger.

Visit wsdweb.org and click on **FOR PARENTS** button; go to School Messenger Account Help. New parents will receive a letter and activation code to set up an account with WSD.



E-NOTIFY

The new website has a communication tool, eNotify, built into the interface. eNotify allows visitors to the site to receive email communication when news or events are added or changed on the website. eNotify can send out newsletters and other types of information through a central distribution list.

Signing up for eNotify will give you the following:

- Newsletter Subscriptions Delivery Locations (Use multiple emails for one account)

In addition, registered users can receive Site Alerts for:

- News Updates
- Postponements & Cancellations
- Calendar Event Reminders
- Postponements & Cancellations

In order to sign up for eNotify you will need to follow the steps below:

1. Click [Subscribe](#)
2. Fill out the information under New User using the email you want to receive information on. Your email address becomes your username
3. Select the mailing lists you would like to be on. You can change these anytime you want or unsubscribe from all of them by logging back in.
4. The district respects the privacy of the information you submit.

Note: Once you have your account set-up, click the [eNotify](#) link to make changes to your account or check for posted messages.

TheCURRENT

Each month of the school year, September through June, I publish a home and school newsletter entitled, *TheCURRENT*. This publication contains important school-based information related to upcoming events, important announcements, reminders about various school routines, and any other information deemed important to share with our families. *TheCURRENT* is published monthly and will be sent via eNotify if you have registered with that service; it will always be available on the district website on the Stony Creek page under Newsletters. We do not send home *TheCURRENT* in paper form as we are working hard to go *Green*!



THIS WEEK AT STONY CREEK

Each weekend (usually on Sundays), Mrs. Suchodolski, a member of the PTO Executive Board, organizes an electronic publication that is sent out via e-mail to those families who register to receive it. It contains school information related to the upcoming week. In this publication you will find important announcements, the week's schedule, a note from the nurse and upcoming event information. Parents find this publication very helpful. You can register to receive this publication at multiple e-mail addresses. We are most appreciative of Mrs. Suchodolski's volunteer efforts to make this publication happen each week at Stony Creek.



This Week at Stony Creek



On Sundays...

(sent via e-mail to registered families)

▼ Sunday

 Stony Creek Elementary
This Week at Stony Creek September 13-17

Sun, 12:40 PM

Announcements

Thursday 9/16 (Day 11A)

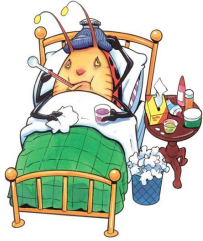
A Note from the Nurse...

Upcoming Dates...

E-mail Tracy Suchodolski (parent)
with your e-mail to this address:
such991@comcast.net

For Your Information

In this section of TheCURRENT, I have included some of the important day to day reminders about the procedures in place at Stony Creek.



ABSENCE

When your child is going to be absent from school, you are expected to call our school (215.619.8108) and report the absence. Include the name of your child, teacher's name, and reason for absence. This should be done the night before or prior to 8 in the morning. Also, be sure to send in a note when your child returns to school. A note is required if the absence is to be considered an "excused" absence.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are special days for our students, and we will honor them with a short celebration to mark the day. Parents are expected to be mindful of the district's nutritional policy as well as the dietary/allergy restrictions of students in the classroom. Class birthday recognitions are short (ten minutes) and limited to the classroom community. Teachers will generate a list of healthy snacks that appeal to the class and communicate this list to parents. Parents are asked to drop off the treats in the main office, and these treats will be delivered to the classroom by our staff. Small Gift Items/Goody Bags/Bouquets of Flowers/Balloons are not permitted. For obvious reasons, birthday party invitations are not to be distributed at school.



CHANGE OF DISMISSAL PLAN

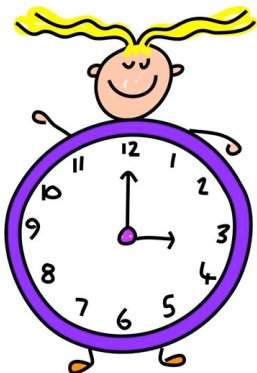
If a parent/guardian wishes to change a student's mode of dismissal (i.e.- walker, bus rider, parent pick up, etc.) it is necessary to write a note to the classroom teacher explaining the change. However, parents/guardians are reminded that students may ride only that bus to which they have been assigned. The teacher will forward the note to the office where it will be kept on file. Requests for students to change buses in order to visit friends after school cannot be honored since most of our school busses are at or near capacity. However, if they will be picked up as car riders or walkers, a note will be needed from both sending and receiving parents.



Any individual, to whom children may be dismissed, must be identified on the *Emergency Information Card*. Please write additional names and phone numbers on the reverse side of the card if necessary. Students will be released only to those individuals whose names are on the emergency card. If for any reason the adult picking up your child is not listed on the emergency card, you must send a dated note to the office of this change. The adult will need to show a form of identification to the staff at the school.

DISMISSAL

We have several dismissal options on a typical school day. All forms of dismissal are supervised by at the Stony Creek staff. Walkers (Our walkers are dismissed from the front doors closest to our kindergarten classrooms.) Parent Pick-up (Parents picking up a child at the end of the day should pull their car into the parking lot closest to the center of the building. Parents wait their turn to move up to the top of the horseshoe driveway and wait for their child to be dismissed by our staff. Bus (Students will be escorted to their busses by members of our staff.) YMCA (Students attending our After School Program will be dismissed to the program by their teachers.)



EARLY PICK-UP

If you need to pick up your child prior to dismissal time (3:15 PM), you need to come to the main office to do so. Such pickups should take place no later than 2:55 PM. After this time, bus arrivals and student dismissal routines go into effect, and it is too disruptive to make a change.



FAMILY TRAVEL

Our district attendance policy allows for up to 5 days of non-sponsored school travel. As with any absence, you must notify the school in writing of your intention to remove your child from school for this purpose. You will receive an acknowledgement of this request from my office. Remember, however, a total of 10 or more days of absence (including days for non-sponsored school travel) in one school year is considered excessive and cause for concern.

SCHOOL HOURS

Full Day of School

7:45 AM	Early Morning Music Students Drop Off Time
8:20 AM	Drop Off Time for All Students K-5 Begins
8:35 AM	Official Start of School Day
3:15 PM	Official End of School Day



Early Closing Day of School (No Lunch or Recess on Early Closing Days.)

7:45 AM	Early Morning Music Students Drop Off Time
8:20 AM	Drop Off Time for All Students K-5
8:35 AM	Official Start of School Day
11:50 AM	Official End of School Day

LUNCH

Children may purchase a hot lunch. The cost of a lunch is \$2.55. For those who bring their lunches, milk may be purchased for \$.50. Lunch menus are published monthly on the district website and a hard copy will be sent home with your child. Please refer to the Chartwells menu for available lunch and snack options throughout the month. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to see that the child has the money to purchase lunch or to bring a nourishing meal.



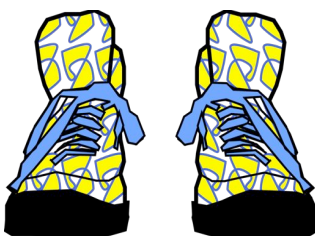
The Wissahickon School District utilizes a Point of Purchase computerized system in the cafeteria. Money for lunches and snacks may be sent to school on a weekly or monthly basis. The money will be entered into the student's cafeteria account. All students will be given a PIN Number to access their accounts at lunchtime. Snacks and lunch funds should be sent to school by check, payable to "WSD Cafeteria Account". Please include your child's name on the check. Parents and guardians are encouraged to use the Point of Purchase system because it greatly increases the efficiency of the lunch lines and reduces the incidence of lost or missing money. Parents are encouraged to make on-line payments at www.mynutrikids.com.

PTO FAMILY DIRECTORY

Directory will provide contact information for our families. This directory will be published in early October, and will not be re-published later in the year. This is the one resource parents like in order to contact other families for birthday parties, play dates, and the like. Information regarding the PTO Family Directory was sent home at the start of the school year.

SNACKS

Snacks must be simple and healthy according to our district wellness policy. Our teachers will encourage healthy snack choices. Generally, our students eat their snacks while engaged in some productive learning activity. Once again, healthy snacks are strongly encouraged.



SNEAKERS

Our students enjoy an active day at school. Each and every day our students enjoy a short recess at the start of the school day (8:20-8:30 AM) as well as their lunchtime recess (20-25 minutes). Given this level of activity and physical education classes on some days, sneakers are the expected footwear at Stony Creek.



TARDY

If your child arrives late to school, *you must park your car and accompany your child into the main office.* You need to sign your child in with a member of our office staff.

TheCURRENT and THIS WEEK AT STONY CREEK

School newsletters are published on a regular basis to share news and important information about our school community. Stony Creek's *TheCURRENT* is the monthly home and school newsletter, and it is posted on our school website; it is also sent you electronically if you sign up with *School Messenger* (see below) and provide an e-mail address. *This Week at Stony Creek* is an electronic publication e-mailed usually on Sunday evenings providing important information related to the coming week. Contact Tracy Suchodolski at such991@comcast.net in order to be added to the e-mail distribution list.

School Messenger

Emergency Notification System for WSD

School Messenger is the automated telephone system that our district uses in order to contact families with important announcements and emergency notifications. Using this system, parents are able to customize the way that they receive these important notifications. Make sure that you are enrolled in School Messenger and that you keep your information updated.

How do I register with School Messenger?

- Enter the following URL into your web browser: <https://contactme.schoolmessenger.com>
- Click the **Sign Up Now** link near the bottom of the page.
- You will be taken to the Sign Up page where you will need to enter a valid e-mail address, a password, your name, and zip code. You'll use your e-mail address and the password you enter here to sign in later. Check **E-Mail Me** when I have a new phone message if you would like to receive an e-mail message each time there is a new message in your mailbox. Click **Create Account** when you are done.
- Next, you should check your e-mail. There will be an Account Activation e-mail from contactme@schoolmessenger.com which contains a link to activate your account. This link will take you to a confirmation page where you must enter your password in order to activate your account. If you don't see the e-mail, check your Junk Mail and spam folders.
- Once you've activated your account, you're ready to add your child(ren) to the account. You should have received an individualized letter for each child. Don't discard the additional letter(s) until you have added them to your account. Click the link on the main page and add your child's student ID and Activation Code.
- When you have finished adding your child(ren) to the account, you will be brought to the **Edit Contact Details** page where you can simply check which types of messages you would like to receive and at which phone number or e-mail address. Make sure that you click **Save** when you are done making changes. If you have other children in the district, you will be able to add them to the same Contact Manager account as soon as you receive their Student ID and Activation Code.

Important Note: *You should only give your work number if it directly dials to your desk. The system is not able to dial an extension if an auto-attendant answers or ask for you if a receptionist answers. Therefore, you should only provide a work number if it is a direct line.*